



Anita B. Gorman Conservation

Discovery Center

SPRING 2010

*“Change is inevitable
— except from a
vending machine.”*

— Robert C. Gallagher

I am very excited about the changes that have been happening at Discovery Center. Last summer staff began work on a new layout for the gardens which promises to be more interactive and just as beautiful as it has been in the past. You can help us jumpstart the new prairie by planting grasses with us as part of our May 15th special event called **Native Greens!**

Beginning March 2 we will offer evening programs every first and third Tuesday of the month. We are starting off with a series geared toward adults and teens that will focus on exploring outdoor Missouri. You can come for one session, all eight or any combination. While these sessions are for teens and adults, we will be offering evening programs for other age groups in upcoming months.

Also starting March 1, Discovery Center will be open only on the first and third Saturday of each month from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. While our hours of operation will be shorter, we will actually be offering more programming during the hours we are open. Besides the walk-in programming we have been offering we are adding programs that require registration. The new classes will offer participants an opportunity to learn in depth outdoor skills and nature knowledge that can't fully be explored in our walk-in programs. Check out the calendar for a full listing of spring Saturday programs.

The last of our changes is that Discovery Center is joining forces with our other Kansas City area Conservation Department education facilities to begin producing a region wide newsletter every other month. This new newsletter will begin with the July/August edition and will include programs for Discovery Center, Parma Woods Range and Outdoor

**NEW DISCOVERY
CENTER HOURS:**
Monday – Friday
8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
1st & 3rd Tuesdays
open until 9 p.m. for
programs and 7 p.m.
for sales
1st & 3rd Saturdays
9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Education Center, Burr Oak Woods Nature Center, and Lake City Range and Outdoor Education Center. This will be a great opportunity for those of you who have taken a class like archery at Discovery Center to see when more advanced classes are available at the

ranges. If you currently get our newsletter mailed or e-mailed to you, you will automatically receive the new regional newsletter. If you don't currently subscribe to our newsletter, you can sign up on our website: <http://www.mdc.gov/areas/kcmetro/discovery/>.

This is a time of tight budgets, but it is also a time to take advantage of new opportunities and I hope you all will continue to enjoy our free Saturday programs and our new free evening programs. While you're at it, take advantage of the spring days to come; stroll through the garden and see what's happening with the plants and animals that call Discovery Center home. — Stacey Davis

Special Event May 15 • NATIVE GREENS • How to use native plants in your yard.

spring events

Activities marked *Walk-in* do not require registration. Activities that require reservations are limited to Missouri residents and are marked *By registration*. To register, call **816-759-7300**. All programs are free of charge. Parents or guardians must accompany children under age 12.

EXPLORING OUTDOOR MISSOURI: HIKING MISSOURI

Walk-in (All ages) Tonight we'll discuss hiking in Missouri from local trails in the Kansas City area to locations all around the state. (See DC Tuesdays sidebar for more information)

■ **MARCH 2 / TUESDAY / 7 – 8:30 PM**

DISCOVER NATURE WOMEN: ROOFTOP TO RAINGARDEN

By registration (Women ages 8 and up with adult) Create an irresistible habitat for wildlife by adding native plants to your yard and using rain from your rooftop. First, we'll demonstrate the set-up and installation of a 50 gallon rainbarrel to an existing downspout. Once collected, it's time to put that water to good use in a colorful raingarden. We'll show you how to design and build your own raingarden with tips on location, size, plants to use, and layout.



■ **MARCH 6 / SATURDAY / 9:30 AM – 12:30 PM**

WILD IN THE CITY

Walk-in (All ages) Are there wild animals in the city? Hawks, raccoons, and bats are only a few of the wild animals that call Kansas City home. Just like us, they need food, shelter, water, and space to survive. Learn about our wild neighbors as we hike, searching for signs and clues of these animals and their habitats. We'll also learn different ways to take care of city wildlife and what you can do to help them at home.

■ **MARCH 6 / SATURDAY / 10 AM – 2:30 PM**

EXPLORING OUTDOOR MISSOURI: FLOATING DOWN THE RIVER

Walk-in (All ages) Canoeing is one of the best ways to explore Missouri. We will explore paddling opportunities, as well as equipment, and skills needed to make your journey safe and exciting. (See DC Tuesdays sidebar for more information)

■ **MARCH 16 / TUESDAY / 7 – 8:30 PM**

HABITATS FOR BATS

Walk-in (Ages 9 and up with adult) Attract bats to your backyard by building a bat house. Learn how Missouri's most misunderstood mammals have earned a bad rap and why they need our help. (one bat house per family)

■ **MARCH 20 / SATURDAY / 10 AM – 2:30 PM**

DISCOVER NATURE WOMEN: DUTCH OVEN COOKING



Register by March 13th (Women ages 10 and up with adult) If you like to cook outdoors then this class is for you. Sign up now to learn the skill of Dutch oven cooking. Participants will prepare and enjoy a meal from start to finish.

■ **MARCH 20 / SATURDAY / 10 AM – 1 PM**

DISCOVER NATURE FAMILIES: BUILDING WREN HOUSES

By registration (Ages 9 and up with adult) Here's a chance for your family to build a wren house. Working together, you will glue, nail, and sand the wood to build a wren house. Then learn how to weatherize and maintain your house for long term wren use. Afterwards we'll go for a short hike to see an example of how to place the house.



■ **APRIL 3 / SATURDAY / 10:30 – NOON OR 1 – 2:30 PM**

MEET THE TREES

Walk-in (All ages) As Arbor Day approaches and the forests turn green again, it's a good time to brush up on your trees. You know your neighbors next door, but do you know your neighborhood trees? We'll take time to meet some of Kansas City's common trees, and explore the benefits of trees in the city. Bring in a branch from a tree you can't identify, make a leaf rubbing, or simply join us in the shade as we key on trees!

■ **APRIL 3 / SATURDAY / 10 AM – 2:30 PM**

EXPLORING OUTDOOR MISSOURI: CAMPING AND BACKPACKING

Walk-in (All ages) Discover places to camp ranging from car and RV camping to backcountry experiences. Get acquainted with the gear you'll need. (See DC Tuesdays sidebar for more information)

■ **APRIL 6 / TUESDAY / 7 – 8:30 PM**

TALKING TURKEY

Walk-in (All ages) Did you know turkeys can fly? Discover other fascinating things about the wild turkey. Fun, hands-on activities will include quill pen writing, turkey calls, and more.

■ **APRIL 17 / SATURDAY / 10 AM – 2:30 PM**

DISCOVER NATURE WOMEN: WILDFLOWER PHOTOGRAPHY

By registration (Women ages 12 and up) Photographing wildflowers with digital cameras is a great way to enjoy a spring weekend. No photography experience is required. There will be a short introduction on composition and basic lighting. Cameras are available if you need one. After the "shoot," we'll review the photos and select your best shot to make a print.



■ **APRIL 17 / SATURDAY / 10 AM – 2 PM**

EXPLORING OUTDOOR MISSOURI: SHOW-ME BIRDING

Walk-in (All ages) Learn how to get started with bird watching ranging from your backyard to Missouri's wild areas. Use binoculars and field guides to identify birds here at Discovery Center. (See DC Tuesdays sidebar for more information)

■ **APRIL 20 / TUESDAY / 7 – 8:30 PM**

DISCOVER NATURE FAMILIES: CONTAINER GARDENING

By registration by April 23 (Ages 8 and up) Whether you live in an apartment or in a house with a large yard, growing native plants in containers can be a fun family hobby. Create your own container as we guide you and your family through the process from container and plant selection to successful planting. Programs start on the hour.



■ **MAY 1 / SATURDAY / 10 AM – 2:00 PM**

CHALLENGE COURSE

Walk-in (All ages) Meet us outside as we have some fun finding our way. Use a GPS unit (provided) to navigate through the forest challenge course and learn about useful trees along the way. Upon your safe return to base camp, you will get a chance to try your skill at primitive fire-starting.

■ **MAY 1 / SATURDAY / 10 AM – 2:30 PM**

MISSOURI'S NATIVE RESIDENTS: BIRDS AND MAMMALS

Walk-in (All ages) Learn about the birds and mammals that are native to Missouri. We will talk about where they live, what they eat, and what might make a meal of them! (See DC Tuesdays sidebar for more information)

■ **MAY 4 / TUESDAY / 7 – 8:30 PM**

SPECIAL EVENT: NATIVE GREENS

Walk-in (All ages) Would you like to attract birds, butterflies, and toads to your yard? Landscaping with native plants is a sure way to create season long interest and attract wildlife. Come on down to take a garden tour, build a planter, transplant seedlings, get your own tree sapling, learn about raingardens, make a seed ball, or join us in the gardens to help transplant 2,000 native grass seedlings in the prairie. Come for the free tree, stay for the fun!

■ **MAY 15 / SATURDAY / 10 AM – 2:30 PM**

MISSOURI'S NATIVE RESIDENTS: REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS

Walk-in (All ages) Some are scaly, others are slimy, and they are often misunderstood. Tonight we will take a close, hands-on look at our cold-blooded neighbors. (See DC Tuesdays sidebar for more information)

■ **MAY 18 / TUESDAY / 7 – 8:30 PM**

MISSOURI'S NATIVE RESIDENTS: WILDFLOWERS

Walk-in (All ages) Blooming flowers show us summer is almost here. Learn how to identify wildflowers and find out how wildlife use them. (See DC Tuesday's sidebar for more information)

■ **JUNE 1 / TUESDAY / 7 – 8:30 PM**

PRAISING PRAIRIES

Walk-in (All ages) Prairie wildflowers are in bloom across the state. The tallgrass prairie is one of Missouri's most beautiful, yet threatened natural communities. Discover prairie plants and animals at hands-on learning stations and attend a short photography presentation on where to go to experience a real prairie during peak blooming season.

■ **JUNE 5 / SATURDAY / 10 AM – 2:30 PM**

New! Discovery Center Tuesdays

EXPLORING OUTDOOR MISSOURI

In this four-part series, we will introduce you to various ways to enjoy Missouri's natural beauty. Each session will focus on a different activity to get out and explore the wonders that our state has to offer. We will talk about where to go and what you will need, and include hands-on time with the equipment. Each session is limited to 40 participants and is open to all ages, but geared for teen and adults. The four sessions and dates are: Hiking Missouri, March 2; Floating Down the River, March 16; Camping and Backpacking, April 6; Show-Me Birding, April 20.

MISSOURI'S NATIVE RESIDENTS

In this four-part series, we will be getting to know some of the plants and animals that call Missouri home. Each program will focus on different groups of plants and animals. Explore our neighbors with feathers, fur, scales, flowers, and leaves. Each session is limited to 40 participants and is open to all ages, but geared for adults. The four sessions and dates are: Birds and Mammals, May 4; Reptiles and Amphibians, May 18; Wildflowers, June 1; Trees, June 15. All programs begin at 7:00 p.m. and end at 8:30 p.m. and will be presented in Nature's Bounty Workshop.

DISCOVER NATURE WOMEN: HIKING STICKS AND HIKING

By registration (Women ages 12 and up) Ever been out walking or hiking and wish you had a sturdy stick? Use a drawknife to make your own walking/hiking stick. If you wish, bring your own small decorations to customize your stick. Afterwards we'll travel to Burr Oak Woods in Blue Springs to hike the Bethany Falls Trail, learning how to fully utilize the stick.

■ **JUNE 5 / SATURDAY / 10 AM – 2 PM**

MISSOURI'S NATIVE RESIDENTS: TREES

Walk-in (All ages) Join us as we look into the wonderful world of Missouri's trees. Find out what trees are native to Missouri and how both people and wildlife use them. (See DC Tuesdays sidebar for more information)

■ **JUNE 15 / TUESDAY / 7 – 8:30 PM**

LOST

Walk-in (All ages) Help, you're lost in the woods and don't know what to do! Join us to learn some essential skills for staying alive if you get lost. We will talk about the importance of food, water, and shelter. You'll practice survival skills including fire starting, shelter building, and orienteering using both modern methods, as well as those used by early explorers.

■ **JUNE 19 / SATURDAY / 10 AM – 2:30 PM**

DISCOVER NATURE FAMILIES: FISHING

Register by June 12th (Ages 8 and up) Bring the family out for a day of fishing fun. We'll begin at Discovery Center learning basic fishing skills, then head to a local lake to hook the big one. All fishing equipment and bait are provided. Transportation and meals are on your own.

■ **JUNE 19 / SATURDAY / 10 – 11:30 AM (DISCOVERY CENTER) AND 12:30 – 3 PM (FISHING)**





Calling All City Gardeners for Plant Exchange

The fourth annual Citywide Plant and Seed Exchange will be at Discovery Center on Saturday May 15, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. All gardeners are encouraged to pot extra plants and cuttings that they have, label them and bring them in to trade with other gardeners. Feel free to also bring in seeds, bulbs, tubers, and cuttings so long as they are plainly marked. The plants do better if you pot them up a week or two ahead. While here, join the fun with Native Greens, a special event promoting the use of native plants to add beauty and attract wildlife to your landscape. Everyone is invited and it's free!

Bass Pro to Host Passport Kick-Off

Join Discovery Center and Burr Oak Woods along with twenty other nature, science and historic sites across Kansas City for the annual Interpretive Site Coalition Passport Kick-Off Event at the Independence Bass Pro on March 27 from noon – 4:00 p.m. Participation entails visiting various nature centers, historic sites and museums in the Kansas City region between March 27 and October 31, 2010. Participating locations have passports available, pick one up and begin your exploration of Kansas City.

Home School Day on the Prairie

Prairies are filled with a diversity of life, from tall grasses to regal butterflies. Home school students are invited to join us for a day to explore our prairie heritage and make your own discoveries of life within this unique ecosystem on **Wednesday, June 2, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.** with programs every 30 minutes on the hour and half hour.



Art and Nature Meet on the Prairie

On your next visit to Discovery Center, check out our newest landscape feature, four woven sculptures located between the stream and prairie.

This ephemeral cityscape entitled, "Furbirdan Sprawl" is designed to mimic the urban vista around us, while attracting wildlife to the city. The sculpture class from the Kansas City Art Institute and Associate Professor Karen McCoy chose to work with natural materials found on the grounds. It's a sculpture that enhances the landscape, adds habitat, and eventually will return to the prairie where it started. One of the students, Lindsey Rife commented, "Hopefully, the collaboration continues when the animals move in!"

Summer Skills Camp Returns to Discovery Center

We're excited to offer Summer Skills Camp for Missouri kids ages 10 to 14. Participants will learn outdoor skills Monday through Wednesday at Discovery Center, then apply their new skills during a field day at Platte Falls on Thursday. Camp is free of charge and limited to Missouri residents and will be filled on a first come, first served basis.

Dates: June 14 – 17, 2010

Campers: Ages 10 – 14

Time: 9:30 a.m. – 2 p.m. daily

To receive enrollment forms contact Wendy Parrett starting Monday, April 5 at **Wendy.**

Parrett@mdc.mo.gov or call 816-759-7305 ext. 2241.

Calling All Volunteers

Have you ever thought about sharing your joy and knowledge of nature with others? Becoming a Missouri Department of Conservation volunteer provides you the opportunity to give back through a variety of activities. Join us for an eight hour training on Saturday, June 12 at Lake City Range. For details, please call Wendy Parrett at 816-759-7305 ext. 2241.



www.mdc.mo.gov

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